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Fortieth session
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Agenda item 3

DEVELOPMENTS AND ISSUES IN THE URUGUAY ROUND OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Draft Agreed Conclusions submitted by the President

1. The Trade and Development Board resumed its discussion on developments in the Uruguay Round, recognizing that UNCTAD had an important role to play in the analysis and assessment of the outcome of the Round. This discussion was supported and enriched by the documentation prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat as well as by an informal presentation by Mr. J. Seade, Deputy Director-General of GATT.

2. It was understood that, in accordance with paragraph 144 of the Cartagena Commitment and in view of the fact that the Uruguay Round was successfully concluded at the Marrakesh Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee on 15 April 1994, the Board will, at the first part of its forty-first session, analyse and assess the outcome of the Uruguay Round, in particular in areas of concern to developing countries and economies in transition concerned, and its impact on the international trading system and problems of implementation.

3. As a result of a comprehensive debate, in which 25 delegations and one non-governmental organization took part, the Board agreed that the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the signing of the Final Act at Marrakesh was a milestone in the evolution of international economic relations and represented a victory for a rule-based multilateral trading system. The Uruguay

Round agreements had a substantial potential for contributing, through the creation of new trading opportunities for all countries, to the world economic growth, and would serve to boost investment, job creation and further economic reforms, particularly in developing countries and economies in transition. This potential was, in particular, manifested in a substantial trade liberalization, strengthening of multilateral rules and disciplines to ensure more stability and predictability in trade relations, establishing rules and disciplines in new areas and founding the new institutional framework in the form of the World Trade Organization (WTO) with an integrated dispute settlement mechanism which should avoid unilateral actions against international trade rules.

4. The Board emphasized that the full and speedy implementation of the Round's results, including the early establishment of the World Trade Organization, should be considered as the most urgent priority in order to realize such potential. However, it was for countries and their business communities to make the best use of the new trading opportunities that the Uruguay Round agreements would bring.

5. It was also agreed that the Round was not a zero-sum game and was capable of assisting developing countries in achieving their objectives of economic growth and development, provided that disadvantaged developing countries were supported by the international community and were offered additional possibilities to offset negative situations as was agreed in the Final Act signed at Marrakesh. In the final run, only practical experience of the implementation of agreements, including the efficiency of a new dispute settlement system to defend the interests of the weaker trading partners, could demonstrate a genuine impact of the Round's results on the international trading system and the trading opportunities of developing countries.

6. It was generally recognized that the developing countries had made a major contribution to the success of the Uruguay Round, particularly by accepting challenges and burdens of trade liberalization reforms and committing themselves to increased multilateral obligations in the post-Uruguay Round period. There were different opinions on the benefits which would accrue to developing countries from the Uruguay Round agreements. Many developing countries

expected to enjoy new benefits following market access liberalization, both in goods and services, and particularly in the areas of textiles and agriculture. However, special concerns were raised regarding possible negative effects on the least developed countries, particularly those in Africa, and net food-importing developing countries, as well as on potential erosion of the GSP and other preferential schemes as a result of agreed tariff reductions. Some views were expressed that the Uruguay Round agreements should be implemented in a manner that favoured developing countries and that food aid and/or credits on concessional terms should be provided to them together with adjustments in the GSP schemes in order to accommodate their interests.

7. Another concern was associated with the new challenges facing developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, as a result of the Uruguay Round, with respect to their institutional capacities, human resource development and information management in order to pursue effectively their interests in the post-Uruguay Round trading system. The Board agreed that developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, may need substantially expanded technical assistance to be able to identify and utilize sustained benefits deriving from the Uruguay Round agreements.

8. The Board took note of a list of new issues, as contained in the concluding remarks of the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee at Ministerial Level at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994. Views of various delegations on some of these issues were also noted.

9. The Board recalled UNCTAD's mandate and important role in the international trading system, noting its relevance as an institution that provided a forum for policy analysis; intergovernmental deliberation, consensus building and negotiation; monitoring, implementation and follow-up; and technical cooperation that took into account the special interests of developing countries on trade and development.

10. It was also recognized that there should be a constructive and effective cooperation between UNCTAD and the WTO based on the complementary functions of the two organizations. Arrangements between UNCTAD and ITC on the provision of technical assistance to developing countries in the area of trade should be strengthened.

11. The Board agreed that UNCTAD should:

(a) As a matter of priority, conduct, at the first part of the forty-first session of the Trade and Development Board, an in-depth analysis and assessment of the outcome of the Uruguay Round, in particular in areas of concern to developing countries and economies in transition concerned, and its impact on the international trading system and problems of implementation;

(b) Organize regional seminars or workshops on the outcome and implementation of the Uruguay Round. Appropriate resources should be allocated for this purpose in order that the secretariat could conduct such seminars or workshops;

(c) Follow developments in the international trading system and identify new trading opportunities arising from the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements in order to provide information and technical support with a view to facilitating the integration of developing countries and economies in transition concerned into the system, to assist these countries to take full advantage of new trading opportunities and enable them, when appropriate, to make use of the clauses which provide differential and more favourable treatment in accordance with the Final Act signed at Marrakesh;

(d) Prepare policy analysis and provide a forum for intergovernmental deliberation and global consensus-building on the new and emerging issues of the international trade agenda, such as trade and environment and competition policy, thus contributing to a better understanding of such issues, including their development implications for developing countries;

(e) Refocus and intensify, where necessary, its technical assistance in the light of the Uruguay Round agreements aiming to increase the capacities of developing countries, especially the least developed among them, as well as to the economies in transition concerned, for their effective participation in the international trading system, and to ensure an efficient cooperation with relevant international organizations, in particular with the WTO and ITC.

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Item 1(c)(d) of the agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST PART OF THE FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD*

1. Procedural matters:

   (a) Election of officers

   (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the session

   (c) Adoption of the report on credentials

   (d) Provisional agenda for the second part of the forty-first session of the Board.

   (e) Provisional agenda for the pre-sessional Executive session of the Board (Spring 1995)

2. International implications of macro-economic policies and issues concerning interdependence: elements of successful growth and adjustment strategies

3. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Conference at its eighth session:

   [To be completed in the light of developments]

4. Sustainable development: trade and environment: the impact of environment-related policies on export competitiveness and market access

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* *The Provisional Agenda will be reviewed in the light of the outcome of the Mid-Term Review at the resumed session of the Trade and Development Board 25 - 27 May 1994.*

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5. Analysis and assessment of the outcome of the Uruguay Round: in particular in areas of concern to developing countries and economies in transition concerned, and its impact on the international trading system and problems of implementation

6. Celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of UNCTAD

7. UNCTAD's assistance to the Palestinian people.

8. Other matters in the field of trade and development:

   (a) Progressive development of the law of international trade: twenty-sixth annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law;

   (b) United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency;

   [to be completed in the light of developments]

9. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters:

   (a) Designation of intergovernmental bodies for the purposes of rule 76 of the rules of procedure of the Board;

   (b) Designation and classification of non-governmental organizations for the purposed of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board;

   (c) Review of the calendar of meetings;

   (d) Administrative and financial implications of the actions of the Board.

10. Other business.

11. Adoption of the report of the Board.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE (PRE-SESSIONAL) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Autumn 1994)

1. Adoption of the agenda of the session

2. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters

   (a) Treatment of new States members of UNCTAD for the purposes of elections

   (b) Membership of the Trade and Development Board

   (c) Membership of the Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Working Groups

   (d) Membership of the Working Party on the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme Budget for 1995

3. Nomination of officers for the Bureau and Sessional Committees of the forty-first session of the Board

4. Reports and activities of the subsidiary bodies of the Board: matters requiring action

   [to be completed in the light of developments]

5. Contribution of the Trade and Development Board to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

6. Outcome of the mid-term review (May 1994): matters requiring follow-up

7. Preliminary arrangements for the ninth session of the Conference

8. Other business

9. Report of the (pre-sessional) executive session of the Board

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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
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Agenda item 7

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency on its third session

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

For technical reasons, and as a result of the short period of time between the third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group and the resumed second part of the fortieth session of the Trade and Development Board, the final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group is being made available in mimeograph form for the convenience of delegations (see annex to this note).

The report will appear in its final form at a later date under the symbols TD/B/40(2)/25-TD/B/WG.2/13.

Annex

REPORT OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON TRADE EFFICIENCY ON ITS THIRD SESSION

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from 2 to 11 May 1994

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency held its third session at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 2 to 11 May 1994. In the course of the session, the Ad Hoc Working Group held 7 formal and 10 informal meetings.

Opening statements

2. The **Chairperson** said that, although the Marrakesh meeting marking the conclusion of the Uruguay Round in April 1994 had stressed the international community's willingness to introduce a macroeconomic framework for an open global trading system, the microeconomic issues of international trade had still to be addressed. This had been the work of the Trade Efficiency Programme since its launching in Cartagena by UNCTAD VIII.

3. The United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency, to be held in the United States, at Columbus, Ohio, in October 1994, would give the international community the opportunity to take actions which would allow all nations to participate fully in international trade. In all countries, scores of potential traders, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, were denied access to international trade because of the lack of efficient trade procedures, lack of information and information networks and inadequate support services or trade logistics. The Symposium would represent an historic opportunity to change the modalities of world trade and thus actually affect people's lives.

4. An important component of the Trade Efficiency Programme was the linkage of trade points in a global electronic network. At the time of the meeting, nearly 50 trade points had been initiated. The programme brought immediate benefits to participants and had the potential to boost world trade.

5. The work of the Ad Hoc Working Group was unique in that it linked policy issues and technical assistance within UNCTAD. There had been commendable cooperation with private and public sector experts, as well as with a number of organizations such as CCC, ECE (WP.4) and ITC, which had resulted in a new form of synergy.

6. The **Deputy to the Secretary-General and Officer-in-Charge of UNCTAD** said that one of the main objectives of the session was to finalize the recommendations to be considered at the United Nations International Symposium. These recommendations covered the six major areas of interest to trade efficiency, namely Customs, trade facilitation/business practices, business information, banking and insurance, transport and telecommunications. The Ad Hoc Working Group would have to decide on the status to be given to these recommendations at the Symposium.

7. The Ad Hoc Working Group would also have to approve the first draft of the Columbus Ministerial Declaration. The draft would include broad principles for rapid action in the area of trade efficiency.

8. Six months after Marrakesh, the Symposium would provide trade ministers with the opportunity to address areas in which results had already been obtained in order to maximize the positive effects of the Uruguay Round. It was UNCTAD's role to ensure that this opportunity was seized by all participants in world trade.

9. The **Head of the Special Programme on Trade Efficiency** emphasized that special attention should be paid to the least developed countries (LDCs) which planned to set up trade points but were unable to attend the Ad Hoc Working Group for lack of financial resources.

10. The Ad Hoc Working Group would have to decide on the status of the recommendations to be adopted at the Columbus Symposium. One possibility was for the documents to remain as secretariat background documents.

Chapter I

PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF TRADE POINTS AND THE TRADE POINT PROGRAMME

(Agenda item 3)

11. Introducing the item, the **representative of the UNCTAD secretariat** stressed that two kinds of obstacles could hinder international trade: the first was of a macroeconomic nature, including tariffs and non-tariff barriers, whereas the second was microeconomic, including procedural obstacles and lack of trade services. UNCTAD's Trade Efficiency Programme aimed at reducing the second kind of obstacle (estimated to cost US$ 400 billion annually) by 25 per cent, which would generate annual savings of US$ 100 billion per year before the turn of the century. The three main objectives of trade efficiency were to lower transaction costs, to enhance participation in international trade, and to promote "best trade practices", and trade points would help make it possible to assess the field value of the measures considered to achieve these objectives. A trade point was a combination of three components, namely a trade facilitation centre, a trade information centre and a gateway to global networking. He underlined that trade facilitation was a task that trade points could contribute to in all regions of the world, independently of the technology and infrastructures available. Trade points had a vital function to play in gathering all participants in the "trade transaction chain" (importers, exporters, Customs, transporters, bankers, insurers, etc.) and assisting them in pursuing trade efficiency as a common goal. He concluded by mentioning that the trade point programme was now entering its second stage, i.e. that of global networking.

12. The **Chairperson** emphasized that although a number of technical demonstrations would be made during the session, this did not imply any endorsement by the UNCTAD secretariat. She then called upon the representatives of countries operating or planning trade points to describe their experiences.

13. The representative of **Germany** reported that the Rostock Trade Point had been inaugurated on 1 March 1994.

14. The representative of **Saudi Arabia** said that the trade point idea was being discussed in Saudi Arabia, in particular by the Chamber of Commerce, but so far no trade point had been established, possibly because of questions about the suitability of a trade point in the light of the composition of Saudi Arabian imports and exports.

15. The representative of **Argentina** said that his country's national government was considering the possibility of the newly created "Fondación Exportación" (involving both the Minister of International Relations and Trade and the Minister of the Economy, and chaired by the former) offering a link with the future trade point network as one of the services for its users.

16. The representative of **Australia** said that his Government had not yet determined its position on the trade point issue, though it was most interested. A recent review of the Australian Customs service had placed emphasis on trade facilitation and EDI.

17. The representative of **Canada** said that several organizations in Canada had expressed interest in the trade point programme and would be awaiting the outcome of the Working Group's session with interest. As yet, however, no trade point was operational in Canada.

18. The representative of **Chile** reported that the creation of the Santiago Trade Point was in its final stages.

19. The representative of **China** said that the Shanghai Trade Point was being set up with the support of the central and local government and its inauguration was expected for June 1994.

20. The representative of **Cuba** said that the Cuban Government intended to set up a trade point in Havana and, at a later date, in Varadero and Santiago de Cuba. The Government was creating a Trade Efficiency Association, in which all Government bodies and enterprises involved in foreign trade would participate.

21. The representative of the **United States of America** said that there were now 10 people working full-time at the North American Trade Point (NATP) in Columbus. The Trade Point was working with the Department of Commerce and the Department of Defense on several projects. The Trade Point's electronic catalogue was now live on the Internet network. The challenges the NATP faced were mainly organizational and financial. The NATP would also be responsible for logistics at the Symposium and was to ensure communications between Columbus and the other trade points.

22. The representative of the **Russian Federation** said that his Government intended to create a whole network of trade points. The country was currently in transition, and there were large numbers of new participants in foreign trade who were unfamiliar with trade practices. Of primary importance was the National Council for EDIFACT, whose main task was to disseminate information on EDIFACT, E-mail, and electronic data processing. Training courses on these technologies were to be carried out.

23. The representative of **Finland** informed the Working Group that trade points were being established in Helsinki, Estonia, and Ukraine, in line with UNCTAD's request to support the creation of trade points in less developed countries and countries in transition. In February, the three countries concerned had attended a six-week training session in Helsinki, where the topics had included the basics of ECE trade facilitation recommendations.

24. Trade points should disseminate information on trade procedures and provide technical solutions that did not require highly technical skills on the part of

trade points or end users. Although ultimately trade points should be self-supporting, in the initial stages they needed donor or governmental support.

25. Finally, he gave a brief description of the technical solution developed by the Helsinki Trade Point based on Trader/2 software.

26. The representative of **Hungary** reported that the trade point in Budapest was now being set up and that, in parallel, tests were proceeding with EDI and electronic mail. He expressed concern that not all participants in international trade were interested in the trade point concept.

27. The representative of **Indonesia** said that a scheme similar to a trade point had been in operation since 1989, providing information services to over 500 small and medium-sized enterprises. Indonesia was now ready to set up remote industrial information stations around the country, which would constitute a subset of trade points at the national level. It was hoped to start with three nodes and subsequently to enhance the range of services provided.

28. The representative of the **Islamic Republic of Iran** explained that his Government had approached the UNCTAD secretariat formally on the question of the establishment of a trade point, and a preparatory mission had already taken place. His country was interested in the experiences of trade points already in operation and hoped to have its own trade point in the near future.

29. The representative of **Italy** said that his Government was still considering the possibility of setting up an Italian trade point.

30. The representative of **Morocco** said that the trade point programme was an important element of the Moroccan Government's international trade strategy. In order to gain experience prior to the Symposium, the trade point would be installed in temporary premises.

31. The representative of **Mauritania** said that his country regarded trade points as versatile tools that would allow it to be more aggressive in the field of international trade. Two trade points were to be created, in Nouakchott and in Nouadhibou, and the steering committee for the future Nouakchott Trade Point had been established in 1993. The main difficulties encountered related to trade point financing during the early stages of its establishment.

32. The representative of **France** reported that Marseilles had already taken an official decision to set up a trade point. Other cities, including Grenoble, had also expressed interest, but no decision had yet been made.

33. The representative of the **Philippines** informed the Working Group that the Philippines Trade Efficiency Association (PTEA) had been established in March 1994 and that the Trade Point Manila Inc. was now operating inside the Philippines Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The PTEA would oversee the operation of trade points in the Philippines, set guidelines and represent trade point users and participants. In that connection, he mentioned the need for a

clear model defining the relationship between trade points and national trade efficiency associations. The trade point was using electronic mail to disseminate information, but difficulties were being experienced in the field of telecommunications technologies.

34. The representative of the **Republic of Korea** said that his country already had several institutions that were similar but not identical to trade points and was studying how to incorporate trade points in this environment.

35. The representative of the **United Republic of Tanzania** expressed his Government's keen interest in establishing trade points, and an UNCTAD mission had recently visited the country. The main problem was the novelty of the trade point concept. Furthermore, LDCs lacked an appropriate infrastructure in many sectors, including finance and insurance. He therefore urged UNCTAD to consider assisting his country with equipment and training.

36. The representative of **Romania** expressed his Government's support for the trade point programme. It was expected that a first trade point would be operational in Bucharest within three months.

37. The representative of the **United Kingdom** reported that his country was looking at how trade points fitted into information schemes currently in place. He remarked that the development of proprietary standards could lead to closed systems, and he recommended open systems where none would be excluded. He mentioned the need to develop EDI for international trade and stressed the importance of following international standards. He also expressed the strong desire to start sending and receiving ETOs as soon as possible.

38. The representative of **Senegal** informed the meeting that the Dakar Trade Point would be inaugurated in June 1994. The trade point was particularly important as Senegal was part of the West African sub-region where efforts towards economic integration were now under way.

39. The representative of **Switzerland** announced that a trade point would be in operation at the World Trade Centre in Lausanne in two months' time.

40. The representative of **Tunisia** underlined the importance that the Tunisian Government attached to the trade point programme. The main activity of the Tunisian trade point was the collection and dissemination of information on trade opportunities among importers and/or exporters using a variety of means, ranging from electronic mail to printed newsletters. The main problem that had arisen related to trade point financing.

41. The representative of **Venezuela** said that contacts had been initiated with the trade point in Cartagena, Colombia. However, economic reforms were still being undertaken as a first step in creating the appropriate climate for the establishment of trade points.

42. The representative of **Japan** said that his country was looking at the possibility of integrating existing institutions into the trade point network.

43. The representative of **Angola** reported that a request for the setting up of a trade point had been made recently. He stressed the financial difficulties that his country was going through and asked for financial assistance for equipment and training.

44. The representative of **Ethiopia** requested technical assistance to establish a trade point.

45. The representative of **Gabon** announced that, following an UNCTAD mission in March 1994, the Libreville Trade Point would be inaugurated in September 1994. Following the devaluation of the CFA franc, the Trade Point could help provide answers to the challenges that had to be faced. Finally, the cost of telecommunications in Gabon made it imperative for alternatives to be found in the field of electronic data transmission.

46. The representative of **Peru** reported that there was strong support in Lima for the creation of a trade point, particularly from the Chamber of Commerce. A feasibility study for creating a trade point would be completed soon, and the Lima Trade Point should be in operation before the Symposium.

47. The representative of **Thailand** reported that the Thai trade point project would be moving into its second phase with the inauguration of a second trade point in June 1994. That trade point would be product-specific, based on the Thai jewellery market.

48. A member of the **Swiss delegation**, conveying a message from the World Trade Centers Association, said that, at its regular spring meeting in April 1994, the World Trade Centers Association (WTCA) had concluded that there was a strong commonality of purpose between World Trade Centers and trade points and that World Trade Centers would be ideal locations for trade points. WTCA therefore intended to launch a programme of cooperation with national Governments that would lead to the establishment of trade points within World Trade Centers. National Coordinators would be appointed to coordinate communications with appropriate government agencies. WTCA would work with the organizers of trade points to exchange information and services for the increased benefit of world businesses.

49. The **Head of the Special Programme on Trade Efficiency** said that discussions with WTCA had been going on for two years and that he was extremely pleased to learn that the spring meeting had given its blessing to these efforts. This was one of the most favourable events for the Trade Efficiency Programme in recent months.

50. The representative of the **United States of America** referred to the different EDI standards (X12 and EDIFACT) in use and said that the United States should

align itself with the rest of the world. National standards should be developed in the context of international standards.

51. The representative of **Algeria** informed the Working Group that the Algiers Trade Point, inaugurated in December 1993, included all the services involved in international trade. The Trade Point was particularly useful for small and medium-sized enterprises, as it provided information and assistance on all aspects of international trade. Unfortunately the Trade Point was not yet connected to the trade point network. The creation of a "second generation" trade point catering for a larger number of participants was foreseen for the near future. The cities of Oran and Skikda had also expressed interest in trade points. She requested technical cooperation from UNCTAD in connection with the trade point programme.

52. The representative of **Brazil** reported that trade points had been opened in Campinas and Porto Alegre; both were in the initial phase of work and were legally constituted as Trade Point Associations. The Porto Alegre Trade Point, inaugurated in December 1993, now employed five full-time staff. The cities of Rio de Janeiro and Florianópolis already had the infrastructure for the installation of their trade points. The fifth trade point in Brazil was to be created in Brasilia, and the studies for its implementation were being carried out. The installation and inauguration of the trade points in Rio de Janeiro, Florianópolis and Brasilia were expected to take place during the visit of an UNCTAD mission to Brazil, scheduled for June 1994.

53. The representative of **India** said that her country had made significant advances in liberalizing telecommunications and pricing policies. Significant progress had also been made in the fields of finance, Customs, insurance, business information and transport. The first of the Indian trade points was to be set up in New Delhi. The creation of the Indian Trade Efficiency Association was well under way, and the relevant by-laws were currently being drafted.

54. The representative of **Egypt** said, that given his country's severe balance-of-payments difficulties, the Government intended to include trade points in its export promotion strategy. The Cairo Trade Point had been operative since January 1994, and the services provided were still free of charge. Three more trade points were foreseen for the near future. The main difficulties encountered had been the lack of international databases and harmonization of the structure of databases, and ways were currently being sought of connecting the Egyptian trade point with other trade points through a low-cost network.

55. He suggested that UNCTAD should continue to provide backstopping on trade point development and that industrialized countries should find ways to help finance the creation of trade points in developing countries. Finally, his country expected that, after the Symposium, means would be found to make trade points in developing countries viable and to integrate them effectively in a network that would allow them to fulfil their role according to the Cartagena Commitment.

56. The representative of **Ukraine** reported that a trade point was being set up in Kiev with the help of the Finnish Trade Point. As an economy in transition where there had been great changes in legislation, including the foreign trade regime, Ukraine was eager to join the trade point programme in order to overcome some of its foreign trade difficulties. The Kiev Trade Point currently employed three staff members, two of whom had been trained in Finland.

57. The representative of **Zimbabwe** said that his country was interested in the trade point programme. A request for assistance in establishing a trade point had been submitted to UNCTAD in February 1994, and UNCTAD was expected to send a mission to Zimbabwe in June 1994. A trade information centre was already in operation under the purview of the export promotion organization, Zimtrade.

Chapter II

PREPARATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TRADE EFFICIENCY

(Agenda item 4)

58. At the 1st plenary meeting of its third session, the Ad Hoc Working Group decided to pursue its consideration of agenda item 4 in informal meetings.

A. Establishment of a preparatory committee for the Symposium

59. At its 7th (closing) plenary meeting, on 11 May 1994, the Ad Hoc Working Group recommended to the Trade and Development Board, at its resumed fortieth session, second part, that the Board establish a preparatory committee for the Symposium, that the preparatory committee meet from 27 June to 1 July 1994, with full interpretation services throughout that period, and that facilities be reserved for a possible second session of the preparatory committee for one week in early September, on the understanding that every possible effort would be made to complete the work of the preparatory committee by 1 July. It further recommended that the bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group should serve as the bureau of the preparatory committee.

60. The **Chairperson** said that the task of the preparatory committee would consist in finalizing the ministerial declaration and the recommendations to Governments (TD/B/WG.2/L.6), as well as extracting from the secretariat's background documentation (TD/B/WG.2/11 and Add.1-5) technical recommendations and recommendations on trade points. The UNCTAD secretariat would prepare a document containing those recommendations in the background documentation which had not been discussed by the Ad Hoc Working Group; it would present these remaining recommendations in a uniform format but without making any substantive changes. Finally, with regard to the composition of delegations to the preparatory committee, it would be important for representatives to be in a position to take decisions on the texts considered if a second session of the preparatory committee was to be avoided.

61. The representative of **Egypt** said he hoped that the recommendations made by trade point directors at the Working Group's second session would also be before the preparatory committee.

62. The representative of **Finland** said that, if the recommendations of trade point directors were to be discussed by the preparatory committee, experts would have to be present.

63. The representative of **Switzerland** said that, so far, the Ad Hoc Working Group had considered recommendations for Governments, so it would now be necessary to produce recommendations for the private sector. However, those recommendations should cover more than just technical issues. With regard to trade points, the recommendations of the trade point directors had not been

endorsed by the Working Group, and it would be important to determine the source of the recommendations on trade points that would be considered by the preparatory committee.

64. The **Chairperson** said that the recommendations on trade points would be drawn from the secretariat's background documentation (TD/B/WG.2/11 and Add.1-5).

65. The representative of **France** said that the document to be prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat for the preparatory committee should be issued in all official languages and should be made available before the session of the preparatory committee.

66. The representative of **India** said that, with regard to the organization of work of the preparatory committee, it would be important to indicate in advance what documents would be discussed on what dates.

67. The representative of **Brazil** suggested that, since both political and technical issues were to be discussed by the preparatory committee, the possibility of having two sets of parallel meetings should be explored.

B. Draft ministerial declaration

68. At the Ad Hoc Working Group's 7th (closing) plenary meeting, on 11 May 1994, the **Chairperson** presented a draft Columbus ministerial declaration on trade efficiency which had been discussed in informal meetings.

69. The Ad Hoc Working Group decided that the draft declaration should be finalized in the preparatory committee on the basis of comments received from capitals, with a view to its adoption at the Symposium. (For the text of the draft declaration, see the final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group (TD/B/40(2)/L.6), annex V.)

C. Closing statements

70. The representative of **India** said that the draft sectoral documents were still under review by different government departments in his country. His delegation was however proceeding on the understanding that these sectoral documents were UNCTAD's guideline documents for the guidance of participating countries in improving trade efficiency to the extent they considered appropriate. Similarly, the draft ministerial declaration and the guidelines and recommendations to be attached to it were regarded by his delegation as suggestions which would provide Governments with useful assistance in implementing trade efficiency programmes.

71. With regard to the Symposium itself, support for developing countries was crucial for effective participation, and the availability of such support would have to be known sufficiently in advance to allow appropriate planning. His

country requested an opportunity at the Symposium to present the state-of-the-art digital technology it had developed for rural automatic exchange.

72. The **Chairperson** said that the Ad Hoc Working Group had accomplished a great deal, and it had done so in a spirit of cooperation and continuous improvement. Economic success at the national or global level generated new conditions, which often required different approaches, institutions or operating procedures if success was to continue. The technological and procedural changes which had occurred recently had led to global sourcing and the development not only of a world capital market but also a worldwide market in goods and services. Both of those made it easier for developing countries to export and for all countries to expand their trade with each other.

73. Telecommunications had become a driving force which both led to the creation of a single global economy and made the smaller parts of that economy more powerful. This, and other factors such as PCs and globalization, were transforming people's lives at a phenomenal pace. The Ad Hoc Working Group was at the forefront of efforts to deal with such issues, and had had that rarest of opportunities to achieve something of real significance to the world.

Chapter III

CONSIDERATION OF GUIDELINES ON KEY SECTORS FOR TRADE EFFICIENCY: CUSTOMS, TRANSPORT, BANKING AND INSURANCE, INFORMATION FOR TRADE, BUSINESS PRACTICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda item 5)

74. For its consideration of this agenda item, the Ad Hoc Working Group had before it the following documentation:

"Facilitating trade: Draft guidelines on better trade practices - report prepared by a consultant" (TD/B/WG.2/6/Add.1/Part I and Corr.1 and Part II and Corr. 1);

"Consideration of guidelines on key sectors for trade efficiency: Customs; transport; banking and insurance; business information for trade; telecommunications" (TD/B/WG.2/11 and Add.1-5).

75. At the 1st plenary meeting of its third session, the Ad Hoc Working Group decided to pursue its consideration of agenda item 5 in informal meetings.

76. At its 7th (closing) plenary meeting, on 11 May 1994, the Ad Hoc Working Group approved the draft recommendations for Governments contained in document TD/B/WG.2/L.6, subject to further discussion in the preparatory committee, with a view to their adoption at the Symposium. (For the text of the draft recommendations, see the final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group (TD/B/40(2)/L.6), annex IV.)

77. The representative of **Egypt** indicated that his delegation had reservations concerning certain of the draft recommendations relating to Customs and telecommunications.

Chapter IV

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

78. The third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group was opened on 2 May 1994 by the Chairperson of the Group.

B. Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group

79. The Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group was as at the Group's second session, as follows:

Chairperson:	Mrs. E. Shelton	(United States of America)
Vice-Chairmen:	Mr. A.-R. Al Sohaibani	(Saudi Arabia)
	Mr. E. Dreyfous	(France)
	Mr. M. Mangachi	(United Republic of Tanzania)
	Mr. J. Perez Gabilondo	(Argentina)
	Mr. Y. Afanassiev	(Russian Federation)
Rapporteur:	Mr. A. Brahime	(Morocco)

C. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 1)

80. The representative of **Finland**, speaking in his capacity as **Chairman of ECE Working Party IV**, having emphasized the strong desire of ECE to pursue its cooperation with the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency, said that item 2 of the Working Group's provisional agenda dealt with matters on which ECE Working Party IV had been working for many years and which UNCITRAL had also taken up. In view of the short time available to the Ad Hoc Working Group, it might not be realistic to expect the Group to make much progress on the complex issues involved. In that connection, ECE had prepared a questionnaire on related legal and procedural questions, the responses to which would provide an important input for future work. He requested that the questionnaire be distributed to members of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

81. The **Chairperson** said that the original intention had been for item 2 to be dealt with at a workshop, but this had not proved possible. In discussing item 2, the Ad Hoc Working Group would naturally draw on the work of other bodies. The questionnaire referred to by the Chairman of ECE Working Party IV could be distributed to members of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

82. At the opening plenary of its third session, the Ad Hoc Working Group adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WG.2/10), as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. Governments' role in trade efficiency 1/

3. Progress on implementation of trade points and the trade point programme

4. Preparations for the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency

5. Consideration of guidelines on key sectors for trade efficiency: customs, transport, banking and insurance, information for trade, business practices and telecommunications

6. Other business

7. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group to the Board.

83. At its plenary meeting on 6 May 1994, the Ad Hoc Working Group decided, in line with the possibility accorded to it in the UNCTAD calendar of meetings, to extend its session until 11 May 1994.

D. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group to the Board

(Agenda item 7)

84. At the 7th (closing) plenary meeting of its third session, on 11 May 1994, the Ad Hoc Working Group adopted the draft report on its third session (TD/B/WG.2/L.5), subject to amendments to be received from delegations to the summaries of their statements, and authorized the Rapporteur to complete the text of the report as necessary to reflect the proceedings of the closing plenary.

85. At the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Working Group also adopted its final report (for the text of the final report, see document TD/B/40(2)/L.6).

1/ This item will consist of the work envisaged for Workshop 2 as agreed in the work programme of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Annex

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE 2/

1. The following States members of UNCTAD, members of the Ad Hoc Working Group, were represented at the session:

Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Australia
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Cuba
Czech Republic
Denmark
Egypt
Finland
France
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Haiti
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Italy
Japan
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Madagascar
Malaysia
Malta
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Morocco
Myanmar
Netherlands
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Saudia Arabia
Senegal
Slovakia
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Tunisia
Turkey
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Venezuela
Zimbabwe

2/ For the list of participants, see TD/B/WG.2/INF.3.

2. The following other States members of UNCTAD, not members of the Ad Hoc Working Group, were represented as observers at the session:

Albania
Bulgaria
Cape Verde
Costa Rica
Ecuador
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Gabon
Iraq
Jamaica
Nepal
Paraguay
Qatar
Slovenia
Spain
Sudan
Thailand
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
Viet Nam

3. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia was represented at the session.

The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT was also represented at the session.

4. The following specialized and related agencies were represented at the session:

International Monetary Fund.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was also represented at the session.

5. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

Customs Co-operation Council
European Community
African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
League of Arab States
Organization of African Unity

6. The following non-governmental organizations were represented at the session:

General Category

International Chamber of Commerce
World Federation of United Nations Associations

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Agenda item 7

Final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

For technical reasons, and as a result of the short period of time between the third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group and the resumed second part of the fortieth session of the Trade and Development Board, the final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group is being made available in mimeograph form for the convenience of delegations (see annex to this note).

The report will appear in its final form at a later date under the symbols TD/B/40(2)/26-TD/B/WG.2/14.

Annex

FINAL REPORT OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON TRADE EFFICIENCY

As adopted at the third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group,
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from 2 to 11 May 1994*

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VI. United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency: related events

* For the proceedings of the third session of the Ad Hoc Working Group, see the Group's report on its third session in document TD/B/40(2)/L.5.

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1. At its eighth session, in February 1992, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development provided for the creation of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency (cf. Cartagena Commitment, para. 79). Pursuant to this agreement, the Trade and Development Board, by its decision 398 (XXXVII) of 7 May 1992, established the terms of reference of the Ad Hoc Working Group. These are attached to the report as annex I.

2. Trade efficiency measures offer the opportunity to lower transaction costs and to bring new entrants into trade. They are accomplished by simplifying procedures, following international standards, and using modern information technology.

3. Technological change, particularly in information technology, has been instrumental in accelerating the process of internationalization of a number of markets and the globalization of business and financial flows. This has led to the emergence of strategic alliances between corporations and an increasing reliance on worldwide information networks. Thus, as far as trade is concerned, the availability and proposed use of strategic business and trade information is more and more a key to competitiveness. Faced with such a trend, many potential participants in international trade run the risk of exclusion: this is the position in which many developing countries and economies in transition, certain "traditional" economic sectors, as well as - in all countries - a large proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises find themselves.

4. The international community is thus confronted with a major challenge. Likewise, it is also provided with a valuable opportunity to reap the benefits arising from spectacular advances in information technologies if it succeeds in harnessing them to revitalized international trade.

5. There was unprecedented cooperation in organizing the work for this Working Group on two levels - with the private sector and across the United Nations system. Trade efficiency measures have long been urged by the enterprise sector, which has a keen interest in removing bureaucratic impediments to trade. In addition, the new information technologies and their applications have largely arisen in the enterprise sector, and firms have been the leaders in this field. The Working Group was able to benefit from an impressive group of experts in trade efficiency measures from the enterprise sector and business associations, learning from them about new technologies and how these are being used for business in today's world.

6. In addition, the UNCTAD secretariat spearheaded a drive for extraordinary cooperation among United Nations agencies. A far-reaching partnership was developed with the Economic Commission for Europe's Working Party 4, which has been the leader in establishing norms and standards in trade facilitation and electronic data interchange (EDI), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the

International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNCITRAL, and the other regional economic commissions. Close associations with the Customs Cooperation Council strengthened the Group's work.

7. Ninety-three States members of UNCTAD and nearly 30 international organizations participated in the Working Group.

II. FIRST SESSION 1/

8. During its first session, the Ad Hoc Working Group explored the issues of information and trade, EDI and trade efficiency, solutions for efficient trade, trade points, and the 1994 Symposium. The secretariat used the format of presenting the various options of technologies by having individual companies attend and offer audiovisual presentations and demonstrations of their technologies. The Group discussed information systems for efficient trade: information systems, information infrastructure, and the data itself. Depending on each of these three points of view, the concept of universality takes on a different meaning and has different relevance for traders.

A. Information and trade

9. Information systems: Discussion included issues relating to coverage of existing systems and how exclusion can be prevented, access to existing systems, procedures, norms, protocols, technical and economic conditions.

10. Information infrastructures: For many regions of the world, access to information is strictly limited by the lack of information infrastructure. Considering the dramatic decrease in the price-performance ratio of telecommunications and information technologies, new solutions should become available to provide infrastructure on a truly global basis. A selection of infrastructures for efficient trade was reviewed, with discussions on price thresholds and impact on competitiveness.

11. Data: On the basis of state-of-the-art knowledge and experience with using customs-based information, participants described national experiences, results and limitations. The Group explored issues of coverage, access, confidentiality, and transparency.

B. EDI and trade efficiency

12. Electronic data interchange (EDI) is the tool that allows international electronic commerce - computer-to-computer exchange of documents and information. The Working Group was introduced to applications of EDI in all trade-related sectors such as customs, banking and transport. Particular emphasis was placed on practical problems facing traders, such as handling of customs manifest/declaration, documentary credit, port procedures or inventory/invoice management, etc. Various international organizations made presentations to explain the breadth of work being done on EDI. The Economic Commission for Europe's Working Party 4 (ECE/WP.4) has been active in the field of trade facilitation for many years, and presented to the Working Group the progress it

had made in UN/EDI for Administration, Commerce and Trade (UN/EDIFACT), a norm for EDI which is being adopted worldwide. WP.4 had accepted the principle of a joint UNCTAD/WP.4 work programme on trade efficiency, and nearly all members of its bureau attended the session. The Working Group also heard from the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) on the issue of EDI and international trade law. A business perspective dealing with the same issue was offered by the International Chamber of Commerce. A series of enterprises (from the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, France and Germany) presented practical EDI applications for business. Following the presentations, the Working Group held a discussion on the question: "Is EDI for everybody?", examining the costs, benefits, difficulties and options, as well as some of the policy issues surrounding electronic commerce. Questions on the transfer of this technology to developing countries and experiences in national contexts other than OECD countries were taken up.

C. Solutions for efficient trade

13. The Working Group enjoyed demonstrations of some of the most advanced solutions for efficient trade, such as the use of bar codes, line release, and community trade data systems (Singapore's TradeNet). The use of advanced technology in ASYCUDA (Automated Systems for Customs Data), developed by UNCTAD and now in use in nearly 65 countries for such systems, was demonstrated. Members discussed the conditions for applicability and success for such systems and their potential for universality.

D. Trade points

14. As an introduction to the new kinds of technologies which could be used at trade points, a video-teleconference was staged between UNCTAD and the Mayor of Columbus.

III. SECOND SESSION 2/

15. The second session was held one year later, in November 1993. In addition to the intergovernmental delegations, approximately 25 directors of trade points came to the session and provided the highlight of the Group's deliberations by sharing their experiences in establishing trade points. In addition, the Working Group undertook an examination of trade facilitation measures and preparations for the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency.

A. Establishment of trade points

16. When the programme of establishing trade points first began, the UNCTAD secretariat had hoped to have 16 pilot trade points in place by the October 1994 Symposium. At the second session, the Working Group heard first-hand experiences from nearly 25 trade point directors on their activities with the trade points. A current list of trade points, established and requested, is to be found in annex II to this report. In separate meetings, the directors drew up a list of recommendations by trade point directors on the establishment of trade points, which is attached as annex III.

B. Trade facilitation

17. The main substantive work of the session was on the area of trade facilitation procedures, which was presented by members of the Economic Commission for Europe's Working Party 4. The Working Group examined a document on better business practices. This provided basic information on major issues relating to trade efficiency and gave a broad overview of the type of recommendation that might be proposed to the Symposium.

C. United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency

18. Specific presentations were made on the modalities of work and expected results of that work in six sectors concerning trade efficiency: customs, banking and insurance, transport, telecommunications, information for business, and business practices. The Working Group selected the overall form of the meeting (two days of Senior Officials' meetings, three days of Ministerial meetings), and the main topics for the Ministers' Panels. The Group determined that, to the extent possible, it would try to make the Symposium a "paperless" meeting, demonstrating the possibilities of a paperless business world of the future.

D. Core Advisory Group of Experts

19. During the second session of the Working Group, the Core Advisory Group of Experts (CAGE) held its first meeting. Drawing on voluntary attendance from experts around the world, CAGE provided initial technical advice for the trade point directors and for the secretariat in the preparation of sectoral papers. This Group met twice between the second and third full sessions of the Working Group to help further the work done on sectoral papers.

IV. THIRD SESSION 3/

20. The third session did not accomplish as much as had been hoped by the delegations, as not all documents were available in all languages prior to the session. We were not able to examine carefully and debate the full range of information and recommendations presented in those documents. In order to accomplish as much as possible, delegations concentrated on selecting broad recommendations for the ministers, and on negotiating a Draft Ministerial Declaration on Trade Efficiency.

A. Recommendations for Ministers

21. The Working Group considered recommendations for Governments to implement trade efficiency measures in the six sectors enumerated at the second session. The recommendations agreed upon are found in annex IV to this report.

B. Ministerial declaration

22. The Working Group also negotiated a Draft Ministerial Declaration on Trade Efficiency to be promulgated by Ministers during the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency. The text of the Draft Declaration appears as annex V to this report.

C. Recommendation to establish a prepcom

23. As its last decision, the Working Group decided to recommend to the Trade and Development Board that a preparatory committee be called by the secretariat to provide an opportunity to discuss in detail the documents which were not available in all languages at the third session. From these documents the preparatory committee would determine the issues to be discussed in the Senior Officials' Technical Working Groups at the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency.

24. Attached to this document as annex VI is a schedule of the Symposium.

Notes

1/ For the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on its first session, see document TD/B/39(2)/9-TD/B/WG.2/3.

2/ For the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on its second session, see document TD/B/40(2)/3-TD/B/WG.2/9.

3/ For the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on its third session, see document TD/B/40(2)/L.5.

Annex I

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX), as amended, and to A New Partnership for Development: the Cartagena Commitment adopted at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, an Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency is established by the Trade and Development Board with the following terms of reference:

1. To examine how modern organization and technology can be used to foster greater participation in international trade, in particular by small and medium-sized enterprises, giving particular attention to countries and regions less advanced in the area of trade efficiency. In this context, it shall:

(a) Identify possibilities to reduce transactional costs in international trade, particularly through trade facilitation and simplification of trade procedures, thus contributing to the fluidity of international trade flows and developing new trade links between potential and actual trading partners in all regions of the world;

(b) Taking into consideration differences in national conditions, practices and legal aspects, develop domestic guidelines or models for trade efficiency including, inter alia, simplifying, rationalizing and grouping formalities, transactions and information sources, consistent with a country's commitments under relevant agreements of GATT, and other relevant international agreements. In this context, as appropriate, promote the development and establishment of Trade Points;

(c) Promote greater understanding and use of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), including the standards established through UNECE WP4. The Working Group will consider instruments and guidelines for the use of EDI;

(d) Evaluate the impact of EDI-related developments and relevant technical and technological innovations on the trade efficiency of firms, and the potential participation of new players in the international trade.

2. To contribute to the utilization of market opportunities by fostering transparency in trade-related information flows, including by increasing international awareness of opportunities to access publicly available market information.

3. To identify areas in which technical cooperation could be necessary in trade efficiency-related areas, with special regard to trade facilitation activities and the establishment of Trade Points, and possibilities to create new trade links thereby; in this context, adequate attention should be devoted to infrastructural and human resources development, and the organization of dissemination of necessary data.

4. The Working Group shall prepare the 1994 international symposium on trade efficiency, as called for in paragraphs 157 and 178 of the Cartagena Commitment. For use at that time, the Working Group shall undertake research, prepare publications, explanatory or educational materials, including those that emphasize legal or other focuses.

5. The work of the Working Group should follow a progressive sequence in accordance with paragraphs 49 to 60 of the Cartagena Commitment. In line with what is set out in the Cartagena Commitment, particularly paragraphs 18 and 47, the Working Group should be inspired by the need to promote international consensus on principles and strategies for policy action at the national and international levels to enhance the development prospects of member States, particularly those of developing countries. It should provide a forum for the exchange of experiences among member States so as to enable them to draw appropriate lessons for the formulation and implementation of policies at the national and international levels and for international economic cooperation.

6. In its work, the Working Group should take due account of the diversity of country situations and experiences. It may base its work on country reviews by the secretariat and seek from relevant countries the presentation of studies on their national experiences. It could also, depending on the issue, seek the participation of, and draw on the experience and expertise of, non-governmental actors, particularly enterprises, trade unions, the academic community and non-governmental organizations as well as representatives of international institutions.

7. The Working Group should identify for consideration areas in which technical cooperation should be strengthened.

8. The work of the Working Group should be coordinated with that of other Committees and Working Groups.

9. The work of the Working Group should complement that of other international bodies while seeking to ensure that no duplication occurs, notably regarding the work of the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT and of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party 4 (UNECE WP4).

10. The Working Group may recommend for the consideration of the Board the establishment of expert groups.

11. The Working Group shall complete its work within two years of the adoption of its terms of reference. It may submit interim reports and shall submit a final report on the results of its work to the Trade and Development Board.

12. The frequency of sessions of the Working Group is to be decided by the Board in accordance with the existing procedures concerning the calendar of meetings. The duration of the sessions should be of five days or less.

Annex II

TRADE POINT STATUS REPORT
11 May 1994

(Note: n.d.y. = no date yet)

Country	Status	Scheduled start-up date
Algeria	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 02.12.92. TP inaugurated in Algiers on 13.12.93.	12.93
Angola	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.04.94	n.d.y.
Argentina	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 24.08.92. TPs being set up in Santa Fe and Rosario.	n.d.y
Armenia	To be established within a World Bank technical assistance project.	n.d.y.
Bangladesh	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 24.04.92.	n.d.y.
Belarus	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 15.03.93. TP to be set up in Minsk.	n.d.y.
Bolivia	TP operating in Cochabamba. Government proposal to set up two trade points in La Paz and Santa Cruz.	09.93
Brazil	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 25.01.93. Physical TPs operating in Campinas and Porto Alegre. The first of a number of virtual TPs is now operating in Rio de Janeiro; physical TP to be inaugurated in May 94.	n.d.y.

Canada	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.01.93.	n.d.y.
Cape Verde	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 3.01.93. UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94.	n.d.y.
Chile	TP to be set up in Santiago.	04.94
China	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 05.12.92. TP to be set up in Shanghai. TP Association established in Nov. 93	n.d.y.
Colombia	Cartagena in operation since Feb. 1992. 52 more towns have requested TPs of which 12 are now operating.	02.92 10.93
Ecuador	Contacts established with Cartagena TP.	n.d.y.
Egypt	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.11.92. TP being set up in Cairo.	n.d.y.
Estonia	Project with Finland to set up TP in Tallinn.	07.94
Finland	Planning to set up TP in Helsinki. Trilateral programme with Ukraine and Estonia to set up TPs in Kiev and Tallinn. Feasibility studies carried out in May.	07.94
France	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 18.01.94. First TP to be set up in Marseilles. Proposals for four more TPs in Bordeaux, Grenoble, Le Havre and Lille.	n.d.y.

Gabon	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 16.03.93. UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94. TP to be set up in Libreville.	n.d.y.
Georgia	Proposal for creation of a TP within a World Bank technical assistance project.	n.d.y.
Germany	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.11.92. TP set up in Rostock.	03.94
Guinea Bissau	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 22.02.94.	n.d.y.
Hungary	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 08.04.93.	n.d.y.
India	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 29.07.92. TP to be opened in Delhi. Other TPs planned for next year.	n.d.y.
Indonesia	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 29.03.93. Trade information services provided since June 93.	06.93
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 15.12.92. Trade Point to be set up in Teheran.	n.d.y.
Kenya	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 06.05.92. UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94. TP to be set up in Nairobi.	n.d.y.
Mauritania	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 30.03.94 UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94. TPs to be set up in Nouakchott et Nouadhibou.	n.d.y.

Morocco	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 04.11.92. TP to be set up in Casablanca.	n.d.y.
Panama	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 3.09.92.	n.d.y.
Peru	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 9.03.94.	n.d.y.
Philippines	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 18.01.93. TP operating in Manila. Planning to open a total of 90 TPs throughout the country.	10.93
Portugal	Government request submitted to UNCTAD in Aug. 93. TP to be set up in Porto.	n.d.y.
Republic of Korea	Government request received through the World Trade Centre (WTC) in Nov. 93. TP to be set up in cooperation with the WTC.	n.d.y.
Russian Federation	Government request submitted to UNCTAD in Nov. 93.	n.d.y.
Sao Tome and Principe	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 21.04.94.	n.d.y.
Senegal	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 24.03.93. UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94.	n.d.y.
Singapore	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 18.12.92. Virtual TP operational. Physical TP scheduled to open in May 94.	09.93
Slovenia	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 23.03.93.	n.d.y.

Sri Lanka	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 6.1.93. TP being set up in Colombo. Product-specific TP scheduled for next year. Trade information provided since November 93.	n.d.y.
Switzerland	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.11.92. TP to be set up at the World Trade Center in Lausanne.	06.94
Thailand	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 14.12.92. Trade information TP operating in Bangkok since June 93. Officially inaugurated in Oct. 93. First product-specific TP to be opened in April 94. Planning to create another 77 TPs.	10.93
Tunisia	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.11.92. TP operating in Tunis.	07.93
Ukraine	Setting up TP within programme with Finland.	07.94
United Kingdom	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 15.11.93. Plans to set up a virtual TP.	n.d.y.
United Republic of Tanzania	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 02.11.93 UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94. TPs planned for Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar	n.d.y.
United States	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 20.11.92. TP operating in Columbus, Ohio.	09.93

Zambia	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 23.02.94. UNCTAD mission carried out in March 94. TP planned for Lusaka.	n.d.y
Zimbabwe	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 22.02.94.	n.d.y.
Venezuela	Has established direct contacts with Cartagena.	n.d.y.
Viet Nam	Government request submitted to UNCTAD on 14.03.94.	n.d.y.

Annex III

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE TRADE POINT DIRECTORS

During the discussion, there was wide agreement among the trade point directors on the following recommendations:

1. Mobilize early and strong high-level support from the private sector and government to ensure smooth establishment;

2. Obtain technical assistance from UNCTAD, as it is essential for the establishment of trade points at various stages of operation. This assistance should be intensified;

3. Ensure that legal matters are clear in establishment procedures. Circulate existing articles of incorporation on a voluntary basis to provide trade points with guidance for their legal frameworks;

4. Develop trade point systems and services before investing in physical infrastructure;

5. Implement already-established international standards, especially UN/EDIFACT, to secure the interconnectivity of trade points within an open system;

6. Develop complementary business procedures and programmes through the trade point network for efficient exchange of information;

7. Develop training programmes to spread the use of international standards and the techniques necessary to use them, especially electronic data interchange (EDI);

8. Increase awareness of the benefits of trade facilitation measures at national levels (in one country, the debates caused by trade point experiences and studies have resulted in the reduction of the number of steps required for a trade transaction from 34 to 11);

9. Use as wide a selection of valid and reputable databases as possible;

10. Explore ways to lower costs of databases to trade points;

11. Increase participation in global trade by focusing assistance on small-and medium-sized enterprises;

12. Harmonize the interests of emerging and small professional associations within the same sector, offering them an opportunity for joint marketing, etc;

13. Provide assistance in trade transactions, as well as information;.

14. Communicate with other trade points by use of an electronic newsletter;

15. Invite the Bureau of Working Party 4 of the Economic Commission of Europe to meet with the Bureau of the UNCTAD Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency for the purpose of exploring ways of widening cooperation in the implementation of universal standards and trade facilitation processes;

16. Establish regularly scheduled periodic meetings of trade point directors;

17. Request UNCTAD to continue work on the issues of customs, trade facilitation, banking and insurance, information for trade, telecommunications and transport as they relate to the practical issues of trade point operations.

Annex IV

CONSIDERATION OF GUIDELINES ON KEY SECTORS FOR TRADE EFFICIENCY: CUSTOMS, TRANSPORT, BANKING AND INSURANCE, INFORMATION FOR TRADE, BUSINESS PRACTICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Draft recommendations for Governments

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON BANKING AND INSURANCE

The availability of modern trade-related finance, payment and risk management products is a critical element in the expansion of international trade within the developing world. Trade inefficiency in financial services can have a significant impact on the ability of firms, particularly SMEs, to participate in international trade or to compete effectively with exporters from other countries.

The development of efficient markets for financial services will facilitate increased international trade in goods and services, through improvements in the products and levels of service provided by the trade finance community. To further the development of their indigenous financial services industry, governments should:

1. Address the unique structural aspects of the market for trade-related financial services when formulating policy in the area of financial services regulation. Market access restrictions should be eliminated for those financial products which cannot be effectively delivered by a solely domestic provider. Policy makers should also consider the indirect impact of protectionist restrictions affecting trade-related financial services, particularly their effect on export competitiveness;

2. Review their current laws and regulations affecting trade finance, insurance and international payments to ensure that they are consistent with accepted international practices;

3. Consider ratifying and implementing existing international conventions which seek to further harmonize international trade finance law;

4. Evaluate existing exchange control regulations to ensure that they facilitate the use of current financing and payment techniques;

5. Consider allowing exporters to secure foreign exchange to purchase modern financial products which enhance their competitiveness but are not available locally.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON CUSTOMS

Customs play a key role in international trade. Every international trade transaction involves at least two Customs interventions, one at export and one at import. It is clear, therefore, that the manner in which Customs conduct their business has a substantial impact on the movement of goods across international borders. To promote the efficient flow of goods in international trade, governments, through their Customs authorities, should:

1. In consultation with other interested parties (both governmental and non-governmental, as appropriate), clearly define their corporate objectives for Customs and develop and publish an overall long-term plan which sets out the manner in which it is intended to achieve these objectives;

2. Urgently examine their existing Customs practices and institute a programme of reform for those procedures that are identified as inefficient or redundant. Reference should be made to existing international conventions on Customs process simplification and harmonization (the Kyoto Convention of the Customs Cooperation Council). This should be undertaken with national trade and transport interests to ensure full coordination of carrier, port and Customs controls;

3. Maximize the use of information technology to assist Customs in the efficient performance of their duties. Computer applications for the Customs processing of commercial and financial transactions should be developed. Consideration should be given where applicable to implementing UNCTAD's programme for Customs computerization and reform, the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA). Computer interfaces (aimed at using United Nations EDIFACT interchange standards) which allow for the electronic submission of manifests, goods declarations, etc., should be developed and made available to traders;

4. Ensure the effective use of scarce manpower resources by means of risk assessment, profiling, selectivity and targeting techniques to identify high-risk consignments for physical examination. The proportion of consignments to be physically examined by Customs should be kept to a minimum consistent with the accomplishment of control objectives;

5. Take steps to make available facilities for pre-arrival processing of transactions, which can deliver significant trade facilitation benefits and, with appropriate safeguards, does not compromise in any way the control objectives of Customs. The electronic submission of pre-arrival cargo data further facilitates this process;

6. Examine closely the possibility of speeding up, as much as possible, the process of goods release based on a minimum of essential information. However, they should ensure that all information necessary for proper revenue collection, accounting, and precise statistical reporting is communicated to the Customs authorities;

7. Rationalize the cargo clearance process, which frequently requires the intervention of several government agencies in addition to Customs, through

coordinated interventions by the agencies concerned or by investing responsibility for all cargo clearance activities in one single authority, i.e. Customs;

8. Simplify procedures for determining Customs value, which can cause significant delays in the clearance of import consignments, through the use of the Customs valuation method prescribed in the GATT Agreement, as administered by the Customs Cooperation Council, which is administratively less complex than other methods currently in use in some countries;

9. Endeavour, where possible and when high Customs tariffs are developed for national revenue, to broaden their tax base so that Customs tariffs may be moderated, since excessively high Customs tariffs encourage evasion through a variety of fraudulent practices and make enforcement more difficult;

10. Take steps to foster a cooperative rather than a confrontational approach to Customs operations. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) programme of the Customs Cooperation Council should be used as a vehicle for greater cooperation between Customs authorities and commercial operators;

11. Take steps to ensure the highest level of integrity and professional standards within their Customs service. The measures identified by the Customs Cooperation Council in the Arusha Declaration on Integrity in Customs should be implemented. Effective penalty measures are also required to discourage low standards of integrity in the trading community;

12. Institute Customs reform programmes aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their Customs services, thereby avoiding as far as possible the need to use the services of pre-shipment inspection agencies to carry out Customs-related activities. While recourse to such services might be a necessity in certain circumstances, it should be regarded as an interim measure;

13. Consider, as appropriate, setting minimum standards for shipping agents, freight forwarders and Customs clearing agents/brokers or encourage these professions to set their own standards and monitor performance, since the factors causing delays in the release of goods include inefficiency and lack of professionalism on the part of some members of these professions;

14. Ensure maximum transparency and fluidity of Customs operations by providing the trading community with the necessary information on Customs formalities and requirements. Such information should be kept up to date and should be easily accessible;

15. Enhance Customs controls and facilitate import clearance by considering, on a bilateral (or multilateral) basis, the routine electronic transmission of export data from the country of export to the Customs authority of the importing country, in accordance with the laws and regulations concerning disclosure of information;

16. Ensure, in countries where foreign trade statistics are based on Customs data, the reliability of the raw statistical data, as well as their timely transfer to the institutions responsible for the compilation of trade statistics;

17. Ensure that Customs are adequately resourced to perform their designated role efficiently, effectively and to a high standard of professional ethics, since a Customs service starved of resources will certainly be an obstacle to trade;

18. Ensure, through their representatives on the ruling body of the Customs Cooperation Council, that the Council is adequately resourced to carry out the urgent technical assistance tasks which it is called upon to do. The Council, as the international organization for Customs matters, has a key role to play with regard to the implementation of many of the above recommendations by its member administrations.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON BUSINESS INFORMATION

Business information plays a key role in international marketing and competitiveness. Access to timely, accurate business information and the ability to use the information is a major factor in international trade efficiency. To promote the free flow of business information and equal access to that information by enterprises of all sizes, Governments should:

1. Encourage enterprises, in particular newcomers to international trade and small- and medium-size enterprises, to explore the scope for internationalization, as appropriate;

2. Facilitate circulation of, and access to, sources of economic and business information, which represent an important input in the transition to a more outward-looking development pattern. Particular consideration should be given to SMEs and newcomers to international trade. For example, trade promotion organizations and trade commissioner services could be used. International experience on the conditions of success for running efficient business centres and services should be taken into account;

3. Improve training capacities for more effective use of business information, particularly in developing countries and economies in transition. This should include the strengthening of local training institutions (training of trainers), as well as specialized training assistance to trade promotion institutions, business associations and the enterprise sector;

4. Make special efforts to ensure that the necessary telecommunications infrastructures are in place to permit effective access to business information sources, such as on-line databases, especially in developing countries and countries in transition;

5. Support the use of internationally accepted standards, formats, and coding systems when used in the dissemination of information;

6. Ensure a non-discriminatory and conducive policy framework for commercial suppliers of business information;

7. Ensure that a focal point exists in each country to collect, process and make available for retrieval all relevant information on the country's trade regulations, product by product and using standard formats;

8. Develop a coordinated approach to the complex tasks of government institutions relating to business information, for example by establishing a national focal point;

9. Ensure the availability and reliability of up-to-date trade statistics, including those on trade volume and values, using internationally compatible nomenclatures; submit those statistics, on a timely basis to the United Nations Statistical Office; and encourage the use of available modern technologies in the collection and dissemination of statistics;

10. Encourage public and private business information services to strengthen their capacities as intermediaries and interpreters of business information, in particular for small- and medium-size enterprises;

11. Encourage government departments which generate business information, such as departments of statistics, Customs, ministries of trade, central banks, etc., to develop efficient methods of disseminating that data to meet the needs of national and international business communities;

12. Encourage trade points to provide national and international business information.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRANSPORT

Trade and transport are inextricably linked; efficient transport services are a prerequisite to successful trading. Growth in international trade demands the implementation of trade efficiency measures in the transport sector. To support rapid growth in international trade, Governments should:

1. Liberalize, modernize and harmonize transport laws and regulations, particularly through the definition of regulatory items which will foster the development by domestic or foreign investors of logistics that encourage the adoption of commercial practices in the transport chain;

2. Implement specific transport operations improvements such as formation of block-train services, preferential movement of transport modes, and granting of container terminal concessions to companies that operate according to commercial practices; (provide guidelines to update commercial banking and insurance practices in line with international practices recommended by the ICC; and stimulate private investment in training;)

3. Develop subregional cooperation projects regarding harmonization of transport regulatory policies and legal regimes to find multilateral solutions to existing problems, particularly in the field of Customs transit;

4. Encourage the establishment of subregional databases on transport (from the Advance Cargo Information System and other sources).

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Telecommunications are a key factor for international trade in goods and services. Open access to international telecommunications is critical for efficient trade, and therefore Governments should:

1. Develop efficient telecommunications services to serve the needs of participants in international trade;

2. Prepare for and allow competition with regard to value-added services;

3. Identify the minimum service requirements necessary for the efficient use of telecommunications networks for local, national, and international trade by small- and medium-sized enterprises;

4. Provide the necessary support and assistance to enhance capacity building in the area of telecommunications, in order to allow all participants in international trade to benefit from efficient trade practices and trade supporting services. In doing so, they should keep in mind the Buenos Aires Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the First World Telecommunications Development Conference in March 1994. Special attention should be granted to the specific situation of the least developed countries;

5. Ensure development of network access in remote or low-density regions for small business users through the adoption of appropriate network architectures;

6. Establish the necessary telecommunications networks and services to enable the efficient functioning and interconnecting of all trade points, thereby achieving maximum benefits for all participants.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON BUSINESS PRACTICES

Obtaining new market opportunities requires not only the maintenance of free trade principles, but also substantial improvements in the efficiency of the overall trading process. Trade efficiency can be achieved as a result of trade facilitation, improving access to better marketing information and the adoption of new business concepts. In this context Governments should:

1. Ensure that trade facilitation issues are taken into account when formulating trade and transport policies;

2. Set up national committees where government services and commercial operators are represented to promote trade facilitation where not already in existence, with a clear remit:

   - To reduce administrative impediments, in both public and private sectors, and search for concerted solutions to international trade- and transport-related issues;

   - To encourage the use of best practice, including information technology, throughout the trading, transport and distribution, and payment processes, following international standards; and

   - To help develop the skills of the people involved;

3. Encourage subregional meetings of national trade facilitation committees;

4. Ensure that the national trade facilitation committee assists traders in carrying out their work in two ways:

   - Simplifying, coordinating and standardizing procedures for exports and imports by all modes of transport;

   - Developing an aligned import and export document system, both for paper documents and their electronic equivalent, based on international standards, the United Nations Layout Key for paper documents, and the United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration Commerce and Transport (EDIFACT);

5. Establish transparent and simplified procedures to obtain licences for exports or imports of restricted or sensitive products. Once a licence is issued, control should be linked to routine export and import controls, for example, customs clearance;

6. Establish simplified procedures to obtain foreign exchange for international trade;

7. Simplify the procedures for certification of origin;

8. Ensure that national regulations on dangerous goods conform to the relevant international standards; where possible, the dangerous goods declaration should be incorporated in an existing commercial document;

9. Review their international trade statistical needs in order to keep data requirements to a minimum. Data should be collected at a time, and in a way, that cause minimum delay to the movement of goods, such as periodic scheduled returns;

10. Ensure, when the public sector provides international trade services or buys and sells goods that efficient procedures are used.

Annex V

DRAFT COLUMBUS MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON TRADE EFFICIENCY

Preamble

We, the Ministers and delegates of the member countries of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), assembled in the City of Columbus (Ohio, United States) for the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency, declare:

1. Greater participation in international trade is a prerequisite for development. Dynamic and healthy international trade is a major instrument for the economic growth and sustainable development of all countries. It also contributes to the goals of poverty alleviation and employment creation on a worldwide basis.

2. The historic signing of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round in April 1994 in Marrakesh (Morocco) marked the successful conclusion of many years of negotiations on the **macroeconomic framework** required for the emergence of an open, predictable, secure and non-discriminatory trading system. However, efforts made to secure a free trade environment will not bear their full benefits unless the enterprises of all nations can import and export efficiently. Here in Columbus we have gathered to find solutions to these **microeconomic issues** of international trade.

3. Over the last few years, significant progress has been made towards the establishment of more open and dynamic trade relations. Many countries, and in particular developing countries and countries in transition, have made significant efforts to liberalize and adjust their trade policies to multilateral disciplines. In this new context, trade efficiency, which allows faster, simpler, broader and less costly trade, is a valuable policy tool: it offers the natural bridge between the broad objectives of enhancing trade and development on the one hand and the practical measures necessary to allow the international community to reach such objectives on the other hand.

Efficient trade and development

4. Ensuring that no potential trader is excluded from international trade is a priority objective for the international community as a whole. In all countries, potential traders, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises, are confined to the margins of international trade because of lack of efficient procedures, lack of access to information and information networks, or inadequate support services or trade logistics. Although the needs to be addressed vary from one country to the next, enterprises of all countries can greatly benefit from higher awareness of efficient business practices and trade facilitation measures. Since such improvements need not be technology-intensive, they can generate substantial benefits at all levels of the development process.

5. Small- and medium-sized enterprises, a major instrument of employment creation and technology transfer, need to be better equipped, serviced and trained to export and import more efficiently. Close cooperation among national and local government authorities and enterprise sectors strengthens the ability of these firms to participate fully in international trade.

6. As electronic commerce is rapidly spreading to many sectors of activity and regions of the world, concerted action is required in order to allow all potential traders to rely on simplified, compatible procedures and practices, and to make the best possible use of modern technologies in order to lower the cost of international trade transactions worldwide.

[7. Achieving total annual savings equivalent to a quarter of the total value of procedures (i.e. some 10 per cent of the value of world trade) is a realistic objective that we shall strive to reach by the turn of the century. This could represent close to one hundred billion dollars per year.]

8. Electronic commerce is still an advanced, technology-intensive way to trade; as such, it bears as many opportunities as challenges for the less advanced among the nations of this world. The promotion of electronic commerce worldwide should be based on the principle of equality of access of all countries to systems compatible with the international standards recommended by the United Nations. In order to enhance the participation of developing countries in this new form of trade, special terms of access to electronic networks and business information may be considered. The efforts towards greater efficiency should also contribute to achieving greater equity among trading partners.

Trade efficiency measures

9. To achieve these goals, we have decided to initiate a worldwide process to enhance participation in international trade through a set of practical actions and recommendations. As a first step in this direction, we are officially launching the Trade Point Global Network, which will allow all member countries to trade more efficiently with each other, and help those who have so far remained at the fringe of international trade to participate actively and profitably in it, in particular the least developed countries and small- and medium-sized enterprises in all countries.

10. Trade efficiency is a priority area for Governments, the enterprise sector and international organizations. We [welcome] [endorse] the trade efficiency [recommendations and guidelines] annexed to this declaration. This list includes six areas in which we believe immediate action is feasible and likely to generate tangible results for international trade: customs, transport, banking and insurance, information for trade, business practices, and telecommunications.

11. Governments, the enterprise sector and international organizations will all have important and complementary roles to play in the implementation and follow-up of these [guidelines and recommendations]. One area of particular importance in which their energies will need to be combined is that of the adoption, promotion and implementation of international standards.

12. We agree that technical assistance programmes in the following areas deserve immediate attention: training and awareness in the main areas of trade facilitation and trade efficiency; integration of trade-efficient measures in customs and in financial, transportation, and telecommunications sectors; promotion of international norms and standards for collecting and transmitting trade-related information and messages. We therefore call upon the international community to provide substantial and rapid support to developing countries and countries in transition for the establishment and internetworking of trade points, and to technical assistance programmes supporting the implementation of these [recommendations and guidelines]. The specific needs of the least developed Countries in these areas should be considered as a priority.

Role of UNCTAD in promoting trade efficiency

13. The implementation of the present Declaration will require coordinated efforts by many national and international bodies. The United Nations system has a central and irreplaceable role to play in this context, to which UNCTAD can make a unique contribution. We commend the close cooperation established between UNCTAD and other bodies, notably the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Customs Cooperation Council (CCC). We urge that these efforts continue in an integrated fashion, generating synergies among the organizations carrying out this highly valuable work.

14. We note that the rapid transition in technology will bring changes to the present solutions in the years to come. We therefore consider it necessary that policy issues related to trade efficiency continue to be explored by UNCTAD, in close cooperation with other relevant organizations. We encourage UNCTAD to continue its programmes supporting the implementation of efficient trade measures and the extension of trade points to all countries. We look forward to increased trade through more efficient trade.

Annex VI

THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TRADE EFFICIENCY

RELATED EVENTS

(COLUMBUS, 17-21 OCTOBER 1994)

World Symposium on Trade Efficiency

Symposium Schedule: Monday, 17 October

	United Nations International Symposium	Global Summit For Mayors	Global Executive Trade Summit		World Trade Efficiency & Technology Exhibition
			CEO and Senior Level Decision-Makers	Regional Focus Session	
8:00					
9:00					
9:30					
10:00					
10:30					
11:00	UN1 Election of Officers				
11:30	PLENARY				
12:00					
12:30	Opening of the Senior Officials Segment				
13:00					
Lunch					
15:00	UN2 Tech WG Customs / UN3 Tech WG Business Information				
15:30					
16:00					
16:30					
17:00	Matchmaking UN4 Banks, ins, trans, telecom				
17:30					
18:00					
19:00					

World Symposium on Trade Efficiency

Symposium Schedule: Tuesday, 18 October

	United Nations International Symposium	Global Summit For Mayors	Global Executive Trade Summit		World Trade Efficiency & Technology Exhibition
			CEO and Senior Level Decision-Makers	Regional Focus Session	
8:00					
9:00					
9:30	UN5 Tech WG Trade Procedures; UN6 Tech WG Banking & Insurance				
10:00					
10:30					
11:00					
11:30	Matchmaking UN7 Customs, transp, info, telecom				
12:00					
12:30					
13:00					
Lunch					
15:00	UN8 Tech WG Transport; UN9 Tech WG Telecom	Mayors arrive			
15:30					
16:00		UN9 Executive Briefing			
16:30					
17:00	Matchmaking UN10 Banks, transp, info, Customs				
17:30					
18:00	Private Preview of Trade/Technology Exhibition EX1				
19:00	SOCIAL 01				

World Symposium on Trade Efficiency

Symposium Schedule: Wednesday, 19 October

	United Nations International Symposium	Global Summit For Mayors	Global Executive Trade Summit		World Trade Efficiency & Technology Exhibition
			CEO and Senior Level Decision-Makers	Regional Focus Session	
8:00					
9:00		Mayor's Breakfast M2 w/Keynote speaker			
9:30					
10:00	Opening of the UN11 ministerial segment *Heads of State Video Conference* UNCTAD 30th Anniversary Carthage Commitment T.E. for development Launching the TF Worldwide Network	P1 PLENARY			
10:30					
11:00					
11:30					
12:00					
12:30					
13:00	02 LUNCH Trade & Technology Exhibition				
Lunch					
15:00	UN12 Election of Chair PANEL Discussion Priorities for TRULY Global Trade: The Contribution of Trade Efficiency Looking towards the XXIst Century MINISTERIAL DECLARATION	M3 Panel with CEOs/Mayors Municipal Infrastructures for Trade	TS1 Panel: Global Competition and the Information Revolution		EX2 Opening Ceremony
15:30					
16:00					
16:30					
17:00					
17:30					
18:00	03 Governor/Mayor's Reception				
19:00		Mayor's Dinner			

World Symposium on Trade Efficiency

Symposium Schedule: Thursday, 20 October

	United Nations International Symposium	Global Summit For Mayors	Global Executive Trade Summit		World Trade Efficiency & Technology Exhibition
			CEO and Senior Level Decision-Makers	Regional Focus Session	
8:00					EX3
9:00					
9:30	CEOs/Ministers	M4 PANEL	TS2 Global Trade Alliances for Small and Medium Sized Companies		Open
10:00	UN13 TECHNOLOGY AND TRADE (how new technologies are affecting trade: telecommunications, transport, etc.)	Cities & GlobalCompetition		R1 Business Strategies for Europe	
10:30		Incentives for Trade Attracting Competitive Industries	TS3 Electronic Commerce: New strategic Opportunities	TS4 Opening up to fast-growth markets	
11:00					
11:30		Thinking Global, Acting Local The Trade Point is the City	TS5 Telecommunications: Delivering Global Service to Traders	TS6 Electronic Commerce: The legal Implications	
12:00					
12:30					
13:00	LUNCH Keynote speaker				
Lunch					
15:00	UN14 Governments' Role In Trade Efficiency and International Cooperation	M5 Site visits (for all)	TS7 The Trade Point Opportunity	R2 Business Strategies for Africa	EX4 Open
15:30			TS8 Following the Goods: The Global Transportation	TS9 Info-communications: Using and Disseminating Knowledge	
16:00					
16:30				R3 Business Strategies for Asia	
17:00			TS10 Regulatory Issues - GATT and New Market Opportunities	TS11 Getting Paid: Global Payment Systems	
17:30					
18:00	Various sponsored activities				
19:00					

World Symposium on Trade Efficiency

Symposium Schedule: Friday, 21 October

	United Nations International Symposium	Global Summit For Mayors	Global Executive Trade Summit		World Trade Efficiency & Technology Exhibition
			CEO and Senior Level Decision-Makers	Regional Focus Session	
8:00					EX5
9:00	UN15	M6	TS12	TS13	R4
9:30	Trade Efficiency and Development	PANEL: Cities and Employment	Telecommuting and remote management: a sneak preview of the future	Restructuring Business around Trade Efficiency	Business Strategies for Pan-America
10:00	Increasing Participation in International Trade (Global Trade Point Videoconference)	- International Electronic Commerce and employment: how Cities can work Smart - Giving SMEs and New Entrants to Trade a Headstart to Global Competitiveness			Open
10:30					
11:00			TS14		
11:30			Multimedia for today's business		
12:00					
12:30	CLOSING PLENARY			P2	
13:00					